

October 30, 2006
Joint Meeting w/ Board of Education

Minutes

Members present

Brady Wooten- Chairman
Allen Sneed- Vice- Chairman
Leon Casstevens- Commissioner
Kim Clark Phillips- Commissioner
D.C. Swaim- Commissioner

Board of Education

Karin Mendenhall-Chair
Dr. Hazel Brown
Frank Brown
Howard McKnight
Diane Hampton
Rex Baity
Brock Matthews-absent
Dr. Barbara Todd- Superintendent
Gary McDonald- Asst Superintendent
Donald Hawks-Director of Maintenance
Kathy Hughes-CTE Director
Sara McCall-Curriculum Supervisor
Gale Hill-Finance Officer
Kim Rose-Administrative Assistant

Others Present

Eric Williams-Interim County Manager
Melinda Vestal-Clerk to the Board

Chair Mendenhall called the Board of Education to order
Chairman Wooten called the Board of Commissioners to order
Commissioner Swaim gave the invocation. The Boards had the pledge.

Chair Mendenhall introduced Diane Hampton who was recently elected as a member to the Board of Education. Chairman Wooten introduced Eric

Williams as the Interim County Manager. Everyone else introduced themselves.

Starmount High School

Donald Hawks stated that a temporary certificate of occupancy has been issued for the building at Starmount and they should be moving in this week. The safety concerns were addressed and a final walk thru is scheduled for Monday.

Forbush High School

Commissioner Casstevens asked about the schedule for Forbush High School.

Dr. Todd stated they are working towards early December. Chair Mendenhall discussed open houses for both buildings.

Chairman Wooten discussed the trailers at the schools.

Chair Mendenhall stated there are currently none at Starmount High School and four (4) at Forbush High School.

Dr. Todd stated the trailers would be moved once the classes move in the new buildings.

Mr. Williams stated the bid was awarded to run an 8 inch waterline to Starmount High School. The bid was approximately \$549,000 and the Board of Commissioners agreed to the lay lines. Mr. Williams stated he was confident this would meet DENR guidelines and is hopeful to start the project very soon.

Lottery

Dr. Todd stated the first lottery allotment would be in the amount of \$212,393 and the schools should receive approximately \$940,000 based on the current tax rate.

Commissioner Swaim discussed the discretion of the money and how it can be used.

Dr. Todd discussed how the money could be spent on capital outlay purchases and school construction, not technology. She also discussed the possibility of using the money for debt service for construction after January 1, 2007. She stated that a county must continue to spend the same amount for public school capital purposes it would have spent if it had not received lottery monies.

Chair Mendenhall suggested letting the money grow by setting it aside and allowing it accrue interest.

Mr. Williams stated both Boards would have to sign off before the money is spent.

Chairman Wooten asked if the money could be used for water issues at other schools.

Ms. Hampton suggested the lottery money be used for classrooms; not infrastructure.

Middle Schools

Chair Mendenhall stated the Board as a whole wants middle schools. The Board of Education and the Board of Commissioners need to meet in the middle on money issues.

Frank Brown suggested the Board continue making the bond payment setting the money aside for future building projects and with this payment, combined with lottery funds and raising taxes 1-2 cents would build two new middle schools with the capacity to hold 900-1200 students.

Chairman Wooten inquired if building middle schools (grades 6 to 8) would fix the elementary school issues.

The Board of Education members agreed this would help the elementary schools. The Boards discussed the pros and cons of middle schools.

Chair Mendenhall asked if there were any available funds.

There was discussion on the capacities at the high schools.

Mr. Williams asked about the bond in 2002.

Chair Mendenhall reviewed actions taken for the 2002 bond issue.

Commissioner Swaim discussed that the candidates running were pro-education and suggested the Board of Education get a plan and present it to the Board of Commissioners. He stated the decision on what to build should be made by the Board of Education and the Board of Commissioners should supply the money.

Commissioner Casstevens stated that he was not for middle schools, but if this is what the County wants, then they should move forward.

Commissioner Phillips stated the Board of Education would decide on what the schools needed and the Board of Commissioners would work hard to supply the funding. She commented the Boards need to work together.

Commissioner Sneed stated middle schools work well and the Board of Education should present definite plans to the Board of Commissioners. He commended Mr. Brown on the idea/plan for the science and technical buildings.

Chairman Wooten suggested the Board of Education provide as much detail as possible by the next meeting in January.

Mr. McKnight discussed the need for middle schools. He felt the Boards were moving in the right direction by working together.

Mr. Brown thanked the Board of Commissioners for their work in moving forward on the new science and technical buildings. He reviewed the need to reduce the size of elementary schools and with the lottery funds and a 1-2 cent increase on the tax rate would fund the \$25 million needed to build the middle schools. He stated the Board of Education would have plans to present in January.

Mr. Baity thanked the Board of Commissioners for their participation to help our students grow and be better prepared for college.

Dr. Brown discussed the past bond referendum and suggested borrowing the money and starting on the middle schools so our kids can get started early and be competitive with other students.

Ms. Hampton stated everything discussed was good points and the middle schools are needed. She discussed working on more college credit classes.

Dr. Todd stated that middle schools have been needed for a long time and the referendum turned out very bad. Dr. Todd urged for other funding sources.

Mr. Williams stated that discussions are very important, because if Boards are not together, then the children are ones who suffer. Mr. Williams stated he was disappointed with the lack of industrial participation and encouraged discussions to build trust among each other.

Commissioner Sneed stated he has been on the Board for two years and has enjoyed working with the BOE and apologized if he hurt anyone's feelings. He stated that he was very proud of the accomplishments the Board had made.

The next Board of Education / Board of Commissioner's meeting will be held on January 29, 2007.

Adjournment

***Commissioner Casstevens made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Sneed seconded. Vote was unanimous. Mr. Baity made the motion to adjourn and Mr. McKnight seconded. Vote was unanimous.**

Melinda Vestal, CMC
Clerk to the Board